

Social work conference “Social work communities: the people and the profession” to be held at Northumbria University on 26th September 2019.

A university student social worker buddying scheme: the individual, the community and the developing profession(al) – 198 words (excluding reference list and title).

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Buddying/mentoring schemes have been embraced by universities as a positive aspect of supporting students and enhancing academic success (Sandner, 2015). Vocational degree programmes also use mentoring schemes to support and alleviate anxiety for (nursing) student mentees (Campbell, 2015). Mentors also benefit, learning skills and knowledge for professional practice (Crawford, Simpson and Mathews, 2013). Despite this burgeoning evidence base, there is a paucity of evidence about buddying/mentoring schemes within social work education. Social work research about mentoring focuses on specific groups of mentees; LGBT academic staff in America (McAllister et al., 2009), black students on an access to social work course (Cropper, 2000) and social work doctoral candidates (Katz et al., 2019). Only Topping, McCowan and McCrae (1998) discuss a widely available mentoring scheme for social work students, yet this was confined to induction week. This workshop, facilitated by students and academic staff, reports upon the experiences of a co-constructed social work undergraduate buddying scheme, theoretically predicated upon “communities of practice” (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and “student as producer” (Neary and Winn, 2009). Content includes: the evolution of the buddying scheme, its underpinning principles, student mentor/mentee experiences, tasks undertaken and future plans to extend this community outwith the academy.

Reference List

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